

ZBA received 2/28/21 @9:02 P.M.

Jacqueline Tieso
455 Webster Street
Rockland, MA 02370

February 28, 2021

Zoning Board of Appeals
Town of Rockland
242 Union Street

Rockland, MA 02370
Re: Shinglemill, LLC, 0 Pond Street, 40B Development

Gentlemen,

I am writing to once again express my opposition to, and concerns regarding, the above referenced project. I am not sure why the Zoning Board continues to avoid making a decision regarding a project that so very clearly meets the criteria for successful denial.

I am aware of the reason and purpose behind Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40B. My opposition has nothing to do with wanting to prevent affordable housing from being developed in Rockland. I believe firmly that this project is not appropriate for the location where it is being built.

To begin, the project, at 5 stories, dwarfs the neighborhood where it will be situated. The surrounding neighborhood is entirely 1 and 2 story homes. The buildings themselves are inconsistent with nearby existing residential building types. The height, mass and scale of the buildings proposed are not appropriate. In addition, the density of the project takes absolutely no cues from the existing community context, and thus not appropriate for the proposed site. The Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency (MassHousing) denied a 40 B project for these reasons in 2017.

Furthermore, there are sobering water concerns. The developers, if denied access to Rockland/Abington public water, have stated that they will drill wells on the site itself. Given the close proximity to the Hannigan Reservoir, the developers' wells will be tapping into the aquifers that feed that same reservoir. As I pointed out in my last letter to the board, the Hannigan Reservoir has dropped to alarming levels at various points during the year, with photographic evidence posted on local Facebook pages. It is irresponsible to allow a development of this size and density to tap in, one way or another, to a public water supply that is already supporting 2 towns, Rockland and Abington.

In addition to water resources, this project's demand on our currently outdated sewer facility presents problems. According to the recent study by Wright-Pierce Engineering, our sewer plant is significantly beyond its life expectancy and needs to be addressed "ASAP." I understand that the Shinglemill developer is offering approximately \$1.7 million to facilitate updating the sewer plant. The town has not yet seen even an estimated cost to the sewer update; to allow a development that will be a burden on our already overtaxed infrastructure for a one-time payment that I suspect will only be a "drop in the bucket" toward the cost of a sewer facility upgrade is short-sighted and foolish. Rockland's current residents deserve better.

Finally, I am aware that there are significant wetlands in the area. I'm not an environmental engineer or a conservationist, but in 2021, when climate change is something we are all aware of, it makes no sense to be risking certain damage to the existing wetlands in order to have 236 units of housing, affordable or not, developed on an inappropriate site.

I realize that when the Zoning Board denies this Comprehensive Permit application, the developer will take the town to the state Housing Appeals Committee. However, my research has indicated to me that Rockland will prevail at the state level for the reasons I have cited in this correspondence. This is a fight we have to win.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Tieso

cc: Board of Selectmen

Conservation Commission